THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

[ESTABLISHED 1840].

"For behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy" (LUKE 2: 10).

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GREETING.

IN northern climes particularly, Christmas is the happiest season of the year. At first thought, it is strange that it is so. The days are short and gloomy; the nights, cold and long; trees are leafless, and the landscape barren or covered with snow. Excepting the fur-clad and a few other hardy animals, all nature lies asleep. No warbling songsters fill the air with music, no flowers nor brilliant foliage gladden the eye. The rippling streams that lured the heart in summer are frozen and still. The pine-covered hills are uninviting, if not quite inaccessible. Everything is gone which made springtime joyous, the summer delightful and the autumn glorious! Notwithstanding all this, Christmas, in the depth of winter, is full of happiness and cheer.

This is because in Christian lands the Yule-tide festivity is impregnated with the spirit of the Christ. At that time more than at any other, we think of others, and try to express either in word or deed our desire to make others happy. Herein lies the secret of true happiness. "He that will lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's, shall find it," is sound philosophy, which the true Christmas spirit helps us to understand.

Love for God and for one another should be the Christmas theme. Such was the divine announcement by the heavenly host that first heralded the "glad tidings of great joy!"

"Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will toward men!"

How simple the words! How deep, how comprehensive their significance! At Christmas, we celebrate His birth in Whose mission on earth (1) God is glorified; (2) earth is promised peace; (3) all men given the assurance of God's good will toward them!

If every man born into the world would have as the beacon of his life these three glorious ideals—how much sweeter and happier life would be! With such an aim, everyone would seek all that is pure, just, honorable, virtuous and true—all that leads to perfection; for these virtues he would glorify who seeks to glorify God. He would eschew that which is impure, dishonorable, or vile. If every man *desired* to show good will toward his fellowmen, and strove to express that desire in a thousand kind sayings and little deeds that would reflect unselfishness and self-sacrifice, what a contribution each would make toward universal peace on earth and the happiness of mankind!

To all in the European mission and to the missionaries in all the world in whose labors are exemplified these three noble ideals, we send heartfelt greeting! The practical application of these sublime ideals as seen in the lives of two thousand young men and women devoting their time and hard-earned means to the preaching of the Gospel of peace, is an inspiration! It is an honor to be numbered with them! Their pure spotless characters give evidence of the virtue of their cause! With tens of thousands of other fellow-workers they form an army organized in love and manifesting good will toward men!

Christmas is a fitting time to renew our desires and to strengthen our determination to do all that lies within our power to make real among men the message heralded by the angels when the Savior was born. Let us glorify God by seeking the Good, the True, the Beautiful! Let us strive to establish peace on earth by exercising that same good will toward one another which God has shown toward us!

The greatest need of this old world to-day is peace. The turbulent storms of hate, of enmity, of distrust and of sin are threatening to wreck humanity. It is time for men—true men—to dedicate their lives to God, and to cry with the spirit and power of the Christ, "Peace, be still!"

With this thought of renewed consecration in mind, we send to our esteemed fellow-laborers and members of the Church in the European mission all the happiness that can be conveyed in the old but treasured greeting:

A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

DAVID O. MCKAY.

TRUE HAPPINESS.

G. Martin Hopfenbeck.

The telephone rang and John Law ill-temperedly answered the call.

"Mr. Law," the person on the other end was saying, "as you know, to-morrow night is the annual Christmas celebration for the poor children of the community. The committee has purchased the presents and arranged for the Christmas tree, but we now find that because of sickness, the chairman will be unable to take care of the distribution. Will you do so and act as Santa Claus?"

"I thought I had done my bit when I donated to the fund," he said, "I have planned for a time at the club to-morrow night. This whole Christmas affair is disagreeable to me. Why, we always shall have poor children to take care of if we continue to pamper them along with Christmas presents as we have been doing; it seems to me that their own fathers should take care of them. Why is it necessary that we business men must donate and trouble about them?"

"I know, Mr. Law, you are very busy, but we who can, ought to sacrifice a little for these children. They are not to blame because they are poor; often, neither are the parents wholly responsible for their poverty. Unforeseen circumstances may throw the best of us upon the world for help. We should help those who are not so fortunate as we. Not only that, but there is an indescribable joy which comes from being with these little ones and serving them."

"Joy. Humph! A lot of joy there is for me in playing the part of Santa Claus to a bunch of ragged children. I could get a whole lot more pleasure at the club."

"Perhaps so, Mr. Law—pleasure of a certain nature, but not the genuine happiness of which I speak. As vice-chairman of the committee, it is your duty to be there and preside. All the newspapers in the town have promised us good publicity. Won't you come?"

"Well, I guess I will have to. Yes, I will be there."

"Thank you ever so much, Mr. Law. Good-bye."

John Law wheeled in his chair and muttered to himself. Plainly the undertaking was not going to be pleasant to him.

That night, deeply enshioned before the fire-place in his palatial residence, he sat, musing on the speech he would necessarily have to make to the children on the night of the morrow. The cozy warmth of the room combined with the flickering shadows to play fantastically with his imagination. He sank deeper and deeper in thought, ever remembering his task of facing those poor children and most likely their mothers and the reporters of the newspapers.

There was deep silence in the room. Only the ruddy glow of the fire betrayed any sign of life. How cheerfully it gleamed; it seemed to light up even John Law's dark countenance. Its radiant warmth did not betray that noiselessly, a snow-carpet was being laid outside. The merry tinkle of sleigh-bells occasionally broke the silence. In the air was the spirit of Christmas, but the happiness that comes from giving to others had not yet penetrated the recesses of John Law's cold heart. He had wealth and now wished to gain power—that was all the happiness he knew of or cared about.

"I have played every card aright towards the winning of the election next month," he was thinking. "That donation I made to this Christmas-tree celebration has made me popular with the masses. Now if those pesky newspapers would only cease their criticisms! They may set at naught all the popularity gained from that donation.

"Well, I will surprise them to-morrow night. I shall give a speech that will silence them. With the choicest language at my command I shall grip them in an emotional story. . . ."

The door bell rang and he started from his position. He threw open the door impetuously—ruffled that his slumber had been so rudely broken in upon. A gust of wind blew a thick veil of snowflakes upon his face, and a woman, clutching to a child fainted in his arms. He carried her and the child to the couch in front of the fire.

"What a fine predicament," he muttered to himself.

The heat soon revived his intruder, and she peered half-dazed around the room. Her gaze fell upon John Law.

"Oh, excuse me, sir," she faltered, "but I have been walking the streets all day with my baby girl. I could go no farther and so rang your bell. I shall be alright in a few moments and can then continue on."

John Law's curiosity was aroused.

"You say you have been walking the streets? What for?"

"For work. My husband was buried last week, sir, and we have no food nor bread in the house. I thought, perhaps, I could find employment and earn enough to support my child. So far, though, I have been unsuccessful."

Sneeringly, John Law asked, "What could you do?"

"Before I was married, I was a clerk in a department store. I went back there, but the old manager has gone. They told me they could not bother with me and my child."

A four-year-old girl was pulling at John Law's trouser leg, as he stood there looking down half-contemptuously, half-disgruntled at the mother. He turned to remove the annoyance at his side. His look met a smiling face and two big blue eyes. The child's simple innocence startled him.

"Big man will help mamma. Won't he?" he heard.

It was such a pleading tone, and yet so filled with confident expectation of an affirmative answer that his hand could not push her aside as he had planned.

"We'll see," he muttered.

"Oh, thank you, so much," she said. "I knew that Father in heaven would answer our prayer and lead mamma to help."

Father in heaven!—that was an entity which had long since passed out of his life. To hear a child speak of Him with such assurance was something new to John Law.

"Marie has never lost faith in God," said the mother. "Even out in the cold, she maintained that He would not forsake us. I, too, thought surely He would lead my child and me to help. O, can't you do something for little Marie?"

The child was again pulling at him.

"I like big man. He is good like papa."

What was there in that child's voice that seemed to move John Law? He was inclined to pick her up in his arms, but restrained himself.

The child was now hugging his leg.

"Big man loves me?" she was questioning him.

John Law could resist the temptation no longer. He took her in his arms. Imperceptively, almost, to his calloused soul, he felt a thrill go through him as he embraced that baby form. The mother smiled approvingly.

He asked the mother, "Why don't you go to your parents?"

"They are both dead," she said. "We used to have a happy family, mother, father, brother, and me. But one day, my brother became angry and he left home. We have never heard of him since. I know he is good; he always was to mother and me. But he was too strong-willed. The shock of his leaving was too great for mother; she died soon after. Father and I tried to find happiness, but eight years later he followed mother. I was engaged and I married soon after father passed away. My husband and I lived happily together and we were blessed with this little child. We were getting a start in life and all seemed promising and rosy until he too was taken from me. His long sickness ate up our little savings and I was left destitute in the world. Only Marie is left me now—Marie and God."

Marie was running her baby hands through his hair. The touch of her hand, the warmth of her soul seemed to move his stone heart.

"How like my own life, the first part of your story sounds," he said. "I ran away from home when I was about twenty years. I had quarreled with father and so I left. I regretted it at first, but was too stubborn to return. Through the newspapers I heard of mother's death. I wandered around at first, but finally settled here and started up in business. A few years ago, I went back to the old home, but could find no trace of my father or

sister. Oh, if I could only see them again. All I have is a picture of mother which I took with me when I left. Here it is on the mantle."

He reached for the picture and handed it to her.

"Mother!" he heard her cry. "You—you must be my brother."

"What? Is that the picture of your mother? Is your mother's name Agnes Law?" He was excited now.

"I am your sister Sylvia," she said.

"O, Sylvia," there were tears in his eyes now, "welcome to my home! Can I ever make amends for the sorrow I have caused you and mother?"

"Mother and the rest of us forgave you long ago, John," she said. "How happy I am to have found you at last."

Tiny hands were tugging at his tie, and with tear-dimmed eyes he looked again into those two innocent blue ones.

"Big man will help mamma," she repeated again.

John Law pressed her to his breast. A long-forgotten love had seized his being. His cold heart had been melted and he kissed the child's lips.

"My own flesh and blood," he said as he embraced the child more closely. "To think you have been out in the cold, wandering helpless and hungry! Yes, I will help mamma. And you, Marie—you will stay here with mamma and bring your smiles into my life."

The clock was striking ten, and John Law started from his position in his chair. He looked around the room in blank amazement. Where was that child which he held in his arms? What had become of his sister? He rubbed his eyes in bewilderment. Surely he had not been dreaming.

The couch was empty; his tie was straight; no baby fingers had ruffled his hair. Yes, his imagination must have carried him off to the land of dreams and true happiness. There he had found the perfect joy which comes from serving others; he had lost Self in trying to make others happy. The clock had awakened him to the world of actuality again. But the hard lines had softened on his face; now, a look of contentment and peace was on his countenance. In his dream he had found the way to true happiness.

No longer was there any reluctance in John Law's heart to serving the children on the morrow; he had even forgotten about his own selfish designs. The spirit of true service was in his soul.

Across the street, the church bells were ringing out their Christmas chimes. Over the snow he heard, almost inaudibly, the voice of the preacher concluding his Christmas-eve sermon:

"For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's the same shall save it."

SPIRITED CONFERENCE IN FRENCH SWITZERLAND.

THE French Swiss quarterly conference was held in Neuchatel, Switzerland, Sunday, the 2nd of December, with President Fred J. Tadje of the Swiss and German mission presiding.

A special session for the traveling Elders was held in the morning. President Tadje counseled the Elders to greater activity. He exhorted them not to follow the line of least resistance for, he said, they are in God's service and He requires activity. He told the Elders they should be as active and diligent to save the souls of men as Satan is to destroy the souls of men.

A conference Priesthood meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. and was addressed by President Tadje. He impressed upon the minds of the assembly the responsibility that rests upon the Priesthood in the Church of Christ. He explained clearly that no one could be advanced in the Priesthood who does not observe the Word of Wisdom, pay his tithes and hold sacred the commandments of God. Some who now hold the Melchizedek Priesthood cannot obtain the greatest blessings of God, he said, because they are not worthy to enter the temples to obtain the blessings which the Lord promises the righteous.

The morning session of the conference convened at 10:30 a.m. and was addressed by Elders Gordon Romney, Wilford O. Ridges and W. Roscoe Hess and President Fred Tadje. In his remarks, President Tadje said one reason why the world does not accept the Gospel is because the people do not pray to God for the truth. If the people of the world would but follow the admonition of Moroni, God would reveal the truth through the power of His Holy Spirit.

The final session convened at 2:30 p.m. The speakers were President Rulon T. Hinckley, Brother Oscar Freiden, Elder Stephen D. Durrant and President Fred Tadje.

President Tadje said that the troubled conditions exist among the nations to-day because they are striving with their own force, not seeking the counsel of God. The Gospel was restored to give the people and the nations an opportunity to repent of their sins. If they will but accept the Gospel, peace will reign, the poor will disappear, fraternity and righteousness will be ushered in, thus binding Satan and bringing an end to all evil. What has been accomplished in the past is possible in the future, he said. He presented the examples of the City of Enoch and the righteousness that existed among the Nephites after the coming of Christ as evidence that the Gospel can restore peace to the world to-day.

The conference marks the beginning of the French Swiss conference as part of the French mission. Together with the Belgian conference it is now directly under the supervision of the European Mission President pending the appointment of a president of the French mission.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

DAVID O. MCKAY, Editor.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1923.

EDITORIAL:

CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS.

THE most widely commemorated date throughout the lands of Christendom is December 25th, on which the followers of Jesus Christ, the Savior of mankind, celebrate His birth. This almost universal celebration is carried on, too, and will probably continue to be carried on indefinitely in future years, notwithstanding the pretty generally accepted fact, now confirmed by revelation, that Jesus was not born on that day, nor even in that month.

The celebration as we have it to-day is a combination of Christian worship and the pagan celebration of the winter Solstice. The 21st of December is the shortest day of the year. From that time the sun "recommences his upward course, announcing that mid-winter is passed and spring and summer are approaching."

The Romans celebrated this change, under the title of "Saturnalia," by universal license and merry-making. This Roman "festival of Saturn" is really the celebration which was adopted by the early Christians, and is now known as Christmas. With it have been accepted also ancient customs and superstitions from other nations.

For example, the mistletoe bough is a remnant of an old ceremonial rite performed annually by the Druids, by whom the mistletoe was not only held in reverance but also believed to possess wondrous curative powers. The ceremony consisted in the people's marching to the forest and gathering around the oak on which the mistletoe grew. The chief Druid clothed in white climbed the tree, and with a golden knife cut the plant; another priest standing with outstretched mantel caught it as it fell. Two white bulls brought for the purpose, and sometimes human beings as well, were then sacrificed as a propitiation to the savage god of the Druids.

The mistletoe cut by the priest was afterwards divided into small portions and distributed among the people, who hung the sprays over their doors to please and to protect their deities during the winter.

The custom of burning the yule log has been transmitted from Scandinavian ancestors who kindled huge fires to their god *Thor*.

The origin of the Christmas tree is not definitely known, but it is believed to have come down to us from the Roman "Saturnalia," having been carried into Germany by the legions of Drusus, whose great exploits established Roman supremacy in Germany about 15 B. C. Thus we see that even the "Christmas tree" with its glittering pendants and pretty toys ante-dates the birth of the Savior.

Good old St. Nicholas, or "Santa Claus" as the Americans first christened him, was a real person who lived in Russia about the time that old Diocletian was persecuting the early Christians. It is probable that St. Nicholas was imprisoned by this cruel emperor.

St. Nicholas had the true spirit of Christmas, and went about giving comfort to the people, and making children happy. He gave gifts, but concealed the identity of the giver. It is a glorious thing to have old St. Nicholas in our hearts and in our homes to-day, whether he enters the latter through the open door or creeps down the chimney on Christmas eve. To bring happiness to others without seeking personal honor or praise by publishing it, is a most commendable virtue.

Festivity and gaiety, the elements in the Roman "Saturnalia," are still features of Christmas; but the dominating spirit of pagan license has been supplanted by the noble impulse and desire to give joy and blessing. The mistletoe bough still hangs in our houses, but the heathen superstitions of sacrificing animals and men to propitiate angry gods has been supplanted by the realization of the significance of Christ's great sacrifice. The yule-log fire that formerly burned out old wrongs, and consumed bitter feuds, now glows in the grates of loving homes, where hearts beat in thanksgiving and praise for the sacredness of home ties that bind the family circle. Glittering ornaments and brilliant decorations are still hung upon the Christmas tree, but no images of Bacchus hang thereon, and the jolly hymns in which

> "They praised the god of wine,
> Whose earthen image adorned the pine,"

are replaced by the heavenly anthem, "Glory to God in the Highest, Peace on earth, Good will to men." Good old St. Nicholas has long since gone the way of all mortals, but the joy he experienced in doing kindly deeds is now shared by millions who are learning that true happiness comes only by making others happy—the practical application of the Savior's doctrine of losing one's life to gain it. In short, the Christmas spirit is the Christ spirit, that makes our hearts glow in Brotherly Love and Friendship, and prompts us to kind deeds of service.

It is the spirit of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, obedience to which will bring "peace on earth," because it means—good will toward all men.

DAVID O. MCKAY.

PRESIDENT GRANT'S CONFERENCE MESSAGE.

(*Continued from page 790*).

THE Mutual Improvement Associations of the Church have an impressive slogan this year. They stand for spiritual growth among the Latter-day Saints through family and secret prayers. I am convinced that one of the greatest and one of the best things in all the world to keep a man true and faithful in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, is to supplicate God secretly in the name of Jesus Christ, for the guidance of His Holy Spirit. I am convinced that one of the greatest things that can come into my home to cause the boys and girls in that home to grow up in a love of God, and in a love of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, is to have family prayer, not for the father of the family alone to pray, but for the mother and for the children to do so also, that they may partake of the spirit of prayer, and be in harmony, be in tune, to have the radio, so to speak, in communication with the Spirit of the Lord. I believe that there are very few that go astray, that very few lose their faith, who have once had a knowledge of the Gospel, and who never neglect their prayers in their families, and their secret supplications to God. I am grateful for this slogan. I am also grateful that in addition to this slogan the fifty thousand or more of our young ladies are being requested that they shall, during the next six months, observe rigidly and strictly the Word of Wisdom.

If you or I possessed a letter from the late President Warren G. Harding, I am sure that we would prize it, that we would hold it as a keepsake all the days of our lives, and that we would leave it as a legacy to our posterity—a communication from a man that had been honored by being the President of our great country. Do we ever stop to think that the Creator of heaven and earth, the Maker of all that we see in this great universe, the Father of our spirits, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in the spirit and in the flesh, has communicated with us, that He has given us counsel and advice such as will lead us back into His presence, that will give us vigor of body and of mind?

And yet there are hundreds, there are thousands among the Latter-day Saints to whom the Lord God Almighty has given a testimony and a knowledge that He lives, a knowledge that Jesus is the Christ, a knowledge that Joseph Smith was a prophet of the true and living God, and who are able to bear that witness and to testify of it at home and abroad, who, when the Lord God Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, tells them what is good for them, physically and spiritually, and writes them a letter, neglect to pay any attention to it. I am sorry to say that to-day there are many of the sons and daughters of the Latter-day Saints—some of the sons and daughters of leading men and women in this Church, who are having social gatherings and who

think that it shows a spirit of liberality and of broadness to drink wine and to have their tea and coffee and to play their cards, and to do those things that we have been taught are not good for us. I am going to read to you a letter from the Lord to the Latter-day Saints:

"Revelation given through Joseph Smith, the prophet at Kirtland, Ohio, February 27, 1833." Ninety long years ago since the Lord wrote this letter, known as the Word of Wisdom, to you and to me, and to every man woman and child in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. What is there in all the world so valuable as wisdom? Nothing. The one thing of all others that King Solomon sought after was wisdom. "Abstinence from wine, strong drink, tobacco and hot drinks enjoined—moderation in the eating of meat—wholesome foods—promises to those who live according to these precepts.

"A Word of Wisdom, for the benefit of the council of high priests, assembled in Kirtland, and the Church, and also the Saints in Zion.

"To be sent greeting—not by commandment or constraint but by revelation and the word of wisdom, showing forth the order and will of God," in a letter telling you, telling me, the will of God, "in the temporal salvation of all Saints in the last days—

"Given for a principle with promise," don't forget that promise, "adapted to the capacity of the weak and the weakest of all Saints, who are or can be called Saints.

"Behold verily thus saith the Lord unto you, in consequence of evils and designs which do and will exist in the hearts of conspiring men in the last days, I have warned you, and forewarn you, by giving unto you this word of wisdom by revelation—

"That inasmuch as any man drinketh wine or strong drink among you, behold it is not good, neither meet in the sight of your Father, only in assembling yourselves together to offer up your sacraments before him.

"And behold, this should be wine, yea, pure wine of the grape of the vine, of your own make.

"And, again, strong drinks are not for the belly, but for the washing of your bodies."

I remember hearing the most eloquent address that I heard during all of the campaign for prohibition of liquor delivered by Dr. Geisel, a lady who was connected with the Battle Creek Sanitarium in Michigan, and she stated that there were scores and hundreds of doctors that had become absolutely convinced from their scientific investigation, from their personal experience, that alcohol or strong liquors were absolutely worthless as medicine when taken internally, but that they were good for the washing of the body, that there was a stimulating and invigorating effect that those who were sick enjoyed by washing their bodies with alcohol.

I remember after hearing her remarks in the Twenty-fifth ward Sunday-school that morning, that I asked permission to ride to

the depot with her in the automobile. She had a watch lying in front of her and agreed to talk within ten minutes of train time. In going to the train I said: "Dr. Geisel, I am delighted to hear that your investigations in America, France and Russia regarding alcohol confirm what we knew seventy-five years ago through a revelation of the Lord to Joseph Smith the Prophet." And I told her of the Word of Wisdom, and she said she was coming back here some time to spend an entire summer vacation, that she had found so many remarkable things in our faith and our doctrines, that she wanted to investigate them.

(TO BE CONCLUDED).

MINUTES OF THE BRISTOL CONFERENCE.

SUNDAY, the 9th inst., the semi-annual Bristol conference convened in the Engineers' Institute, Bristol. There were in attendance: Elders Russell H. Blood and G. Martin Hopfenbeck from Liverpool; President John W. Crofts and Elder Ralph C. Jones from the Welsh conference; Elder Ernest H. Capel from the Nottingham coference; President John E. Wahlquist and all the traveling Elders of the Bristol conference; and a number of Saints and investigators.

The Sunday-school commenced at 10:30 a.m. by singing, "The Spirit of God Like a Fire is Burning." Invocation was offered by Elder Fred J. Webley. After the sacramental hymn, "How Great the Wisdom and the Love," the sacrament was administered and passed by Brothers Henry E. Neal and Walter J. Neal.

A well-arranged program, touching upon the theme of Prayer, was presented by the members of the Sunday-school: Christopher Bettridge, of the Cheltenham branch gave a recitation; a quartet, composed of Hester Neal, Phyllis Taylor, Walter J. Neal and Fred Underdonn, from the Bristol branch, sang "My God, the Spring of All My Joys"; Hester Neal, of the Bristol branch, gave an essay, showing the power of prayer; Walter J. Neal showed that it was through prayer that the Gospel was restored.

The congregation sang, "Did You Think to Pray?"

President Henry E. Neal, of the Bristol branch, bore a strong testimony and told how he had received his testimony through prayer.

Elder Albert G. Stanger, recently transferred from the Netherlands mission to the Bristol conference, told of experiences that he had while laboring in Holland.

Elder Russell H. Blood told of the early life of Christ, and of the great lessons to be learned from His life; first, the lesson of Love and Kindness, which is shown by His mingling with and blessing all people, especially the little children; second, His obedience to the will of God; third, the spirit of giving or unselfishness which he manifested; fourth, His example of service. Christ was always

anxious to assist others, and in assisting others He gave the Gospel and made plain the way of salvation. The speaker said all will be judged by the above principles. In closing, Elder Blood explained why Christmas is celebrated; what it means to the world, and what it means to the Latter-day Saints.

The morning session concluded by the singing of the song, "Come, Come, Ye Saints," and the benediction given by Elder Rulon H. Sanders.

Immediately following the morning session, Elders Blood and Hopfenbeck met with the Relief Society sisters. Gratifying reports of the Relief Society work in the various branches were heard. Instruction and advice concerning Relief Society work for the coming year were given.

The afternoon session commenced at 2:30 p.m., by the congregation's singing, "How Firm a Foundation." Invocation was offered by Elder Thomas O. Smith. The meeting continued by singing, "O Say, What is Truth?"

Elder Edward W. Southwick was the first speaker of the afternoon session and took as his subject, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." He said that Christ always taught the people of a higher life; He did not concern Himself with material things. To-day, the watchword is efficiency, and the people, in their mad rush to compete with their neighbors, are forgetting to seek the kingdom of God.

Elder Thomas O. Smith spoke on the visitations of the Angel Moroni to Joseph Smith. He gave instances connected with the translation of the sacred record. Scientists, he said, are bringing forth truth to prove the Book of Mormon to be just what the Latter-day Saints know it to be.

Elder Reed M. Ogden said he is thankful his grandparents accepted the Gospel and emigrated to Zion. He said it gives him great pleasure to bear his testimony to others, that they, too, might receive the same blessings which his grandparents received.

Mabel Bettridge, of the Cheltenham branch, rendered a pleasing selection on the piano.

Elder Ben E. Summers bore a strong testimony and said that if the people only study the characteristics of the churches they can easily see which one is the true church.

Elder Rulon H. Sanders said that everyone has a mission to perform here, the same as the Son of Man had a mission to perform. By keeping the goal constantly in sight, each person will be able to blow the dark clouds away and enjoy the bright sunshine. The speaker urged all to seek for the things of Christ.

President John W. Crofts bore a fervent testimony, saying that he owes everything he has to the Gospel. Truth, he said, is the only thing which brings lasting pleasure. "Mormonism" is truth, he stated. He urged people to be liberal and give to others.

Elder G. Martin Hopfenbeck was the concluding speaker of the afternoon session. He took as his text the 89th Section of the Doctrine and Covenants, and discoursed upon the Word of Wisdom. He showed the necessity of being a Latter-day Saint in deed as well as in words and in appearance. In presenting his text, he used well-chosen illustrations to prove the truths contained in the Word of Wisdom.

The meeting concluded by the congregation's singing, "Guide Us, O Thou Great Jehovah." Benediction was by Elder Ernest H. Capel.

A special meeting of the officers and teachers was held at 4:30 p.m., in which Elder Russell H. Blood presented the aim of the mission for 1924. It was unanimously accepted. Ways and means for accomplishing the aim were discussed.

The evening session commenced at 6 p.m. by the congregation's singing, "Now Let Us Rejoice." Invocation was offered by Elder Ralph C. Jones. The second song was "O, My Father."

The general, mission and conference authorities were presented and unanimously sustained.

Elder Ernest H. Capel was the first speaker of the evening session. He said it was a pleasure to meet again with the Saints of the Bristol conference and to see that they are holding fast to the faith. He said that the trouble in the world to-day is because people have lost faith in God.

Elder Wendell R. Anderson bore his testimony and related his experiences in the mission field. He realizes, he said, that there is plenty of work for everybody. He is proud to be called to serve God, he declared.

Elder Ralph C. Jones spoke on Love and Obedience, and said that they are two of the greatest principles on earth. He stated that he believes in following the teachings of Christ and that if the world would follow Christ's teachings, everyone could always love and obey.

Sister Ethel Jenkins sang a solo, "Let There Be Light."

President John E. Wahlquist took for his subject the mission of Jesus Christ. He explained how the fruits of Christ's mission—Christianity—have become the greatest civilizing factor in the world's history. It is because the world has forsaken the truths of the Gospel of Christ that it is to-day in turmoil. He closed by urging all to seek a divine testimony and not to be satisfied with anything less.

Elder G. Martin Hopfenbeck congratulated those who had taken part and had helped to make the conference a success. He gave an interesting discourse on the lame man who begged alms at the Gate Beautiful—the man whom Peter and John, through the power of God made whole. Thousands became convinced and joined the fold of Christ. The high priests and others becoming alarmed at the loss of their followers persecuted the two apostles.

It is the same to-day, the speaker said. The ministers see their flocks leaving them to join the true Church; they persecute the servants of the Lord just as the bloodthirsty Jews did in the time of Christ. By persecuting His people, the speaker declared, the people of the world are crucifying Christ to-day, just as much as though they were actually driving the nails into His hands.

Elder Russell H. Blood, the last speaker, conveyed to the Saints the best wishes of President David O. McKay, who was unable to attend the conference in Bristol because of urgent affairs in Liverpool which demanded his immediate attention.

Elder Blood read from the seventh chapter of Matthew for his text. He gave an interesting talk, urging the Saints to seek God and to continue on the upward trail that they might not drift backward. He said all things are easy if we continue to strive, but if we have a spirit of opposition, things become hard. In closing, he stated that God will direct His people if they continue to be faithful.

The conference concluded by the congregation's singing, "We Thank Thee, O God, For a Prophet." The benediction was pronounced by President John W. Crofts.

EDWARD W. SOUTHWICK, Conference Clerk.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

Baptism.—Saturday, the 24th ult., a baptismal service was held at Manchester (Manchester conference). Elder Ronald D. McGregor spoke on the necessity of baptism; Elder Russell C. Capener spoke on the Gift of the Holy Ghost; and President William Blackburn spoke on principles of the Gospel. Four candidates were baptized by President William Blackburn and confirmed by Elders Alfred V. Atkinson, C. C. Heaton, M. Ivan Batty and Chancy G. Dockstader.

Meetings of Traveling Elders.—Saturday, the 24th ult., the traveling Elders of the Manchester conference met in Priesthood meeting. Satisfactory reports of their labors were received. President William Blackburn gave the Elders valuable advice and instruction for the ensuing month.

President David O. McKay met with the traveling Elders of the Birmingham conference Sunday, the 2nd inst. Elder William E. Allen of the Liverpool office was also in attendance. President McKay gave many valuable instructions. He presented four ideal guides to successful missionary work: live virtuously, work energetically, converse freely, pray continually.

Priesthood Meetings.—Saturday, the 24th ult., a Priesthood meeting of the local Priesthood of the Manchester conference

convened in the Manchester branch hall. Various phases of Priesthood activities were discussed. President William Blackburn offered suggestions regarding the missionary work to be performed by the Priesthood during the coming year.

CHRISTMAS.

While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down,
And glory shone around.

"Fear not," said he, for mighty dread
Had seized their troubled mind;
"Glad tidings of great joy I bring
To you and all mankind.

"To you, in David's town, this day
Is born, of David's line,
A Savior, who is Christ the Lord,
And this shall be the sign:

"The heavenly Babe you there shall find,
To human view displayed,
All meanly wrapt in swathing bands,
And in a manger laid."

Thus spake the seraph, and forthwith
Appeared a shining throng
Of angels, praising God, and thus
Addressed their joyful song:

"All glory be to God on high,
And to the earth be peace;
Good will, henceforth, from heaven to men,
Begin and never cease."

Nahum Tate.

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